INSPIRATION

A Research Paper

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Submitted in Fulfilment
Of Writing Requirement

U. S. Army Chaplain School Fort Wadsworth, New York 13 March 1975

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INSPIRATION

The term "inspiration" began with the Vulgate version of II Timothy 3:16: "Omnis scripture divinitus inspirata" ("All scripture is inspired by God". KJV). It may be defined as the action of the Spirit of God on the minds and hearts of chosen men in such a fashion as to make them the instruments of divine revelation. 2 However, in theological language inspiration signifies the operation of the Holy Spirit on the writers of the Bible, by which the Bible becomes the expression of the will of God binding upon us as the Word of God. According to Dr. A. H. Strong, inspiration is to be defined as that influence of the Spirit of God upon the minds of the Scripture writers, which made their writings the record of a progressive divine revelation, significant when taken together and interpreted by the same Spirit who inspired them, to lead every honest inquirer to Christ and salvation. 4 Dr. Strong divides his definition into eight parts to explain its significance:

 Inspiration is an influence of the Spirit of God. It is the effect of the inworking of the personal divine Spirit.

^{1&}quot;Inspiration," The New Shaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, 1956, Vol. VI, p. 12.

²"Inspiration," <u>Harper's Bible Dictionary</u>, 1952, p. 281.

³The New Shaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, op. cit., p. 12.

HAugustus Hopkins Strong, Systematic Theology, 3 Vols., (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1907), Vol. I, p. 196.

- Yet, inspiration is an influence on the mind and not on the body. God secures his end by awakening man's rational powers.
- The writings of the inspired men are a <u>record</u> of a revelation not revelation themselves.
- 4. The revelation and record are both progressive; neither is complete at the beginning.
- The Scripture writings must be taken together. Each part must be viewed in connection with what precedes and what follows.
- 6. The same Holy Spirit who made the original revelation must interpret to us the record of them, if we are to come to the knowledge of the truth.
- 7. So used and so interpreted these writings are sufficient, both in quality and quantity, for their religious purpose.
- 8. The purpose of inspiration is not to furnish us with a model history or with facts of science, but to lead us to Christ and to salvation. 5

Having considered these definitions of inspiration and their implications, we may conclude something definite about the purpose of inspiration. The purpose of inspiration may be thought of as a more complete disclosure of the nature of God and of His ways with men.^6

⁵strong, op. cit., p. 196.

⁶Harper's Bible Dictionary, op. cit., p. 281.

Furthermore, to keep the meaning of inspiration completely clear, a distinction between revelation and inspiration must be mentioned. First, they differ as to their object: (a) the object of revelation is communication of knowledge; (b) the object of inspiration is to secure infallibility in teaching. Second, they differ in their effects: (a) the effect of revelation was to render its recipient wiser; (b) the effect of inspiration was to preserve him from error in teaching.

Inspiration, then, is necessarily conditioned by two factors. One is the experience, capacities, and responsiveness of the human instrument; the other is the divine purpose itself. God will make known to the men of a given time only as much of the truth as is suitable for that time. 8

There are five primary views of inspiration: partial, intuition, illumination, dictation, and plenary (dynamic, verbal). According to the partial view, the writers of the Scripture enjoyed the influence of the Spirit to such an extent that it is the <u>Word</u> and contains the Will of <u>God</u>. This view includes two specific theories. The degree of inspiration theory recognizes the dual authorship of God and men, but insists that some parts are highly inspired while others are not. The concept theory

Ocharles Hodge, Systematic Theology, 3 Vols. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1946), Vol. I, p. 155.

⁸Harper's Bible Dictionary, op. cit., p. 281.

One op. cit., p. 18.
One op. cit., p. 18.

says that the ideas were given by God, but that men chose the words. This theory ignores the necessity of words to express ideas. The Bible speaks of the <u>words</u> the Holy Spirit teaches (I Cor. 2:13) and the <u>words</u> given by God to the writer (John 17:8).

The partial view admits mistakes, or possibilities of mistakes in the historical and geographical state, but it denies errors in matters of faith or morals. There are five points which it has in its favor: (1) it lays stress on the sense of the Scripture as the revelation of God's will and leaves room for the full play of the human agency in composition; (2) it helps to understand divergencies in accounts of Jesus' life and the inconsistencies in the historical statements of different parts of the Bible; (3) it is more in accord with the method of the Spirit's working in general (apostles were not perfect in conduct and in their judgment as rulers and teachers of the Church); (4) it removes the hindrance of many who would believe the Bible to contain the Word of God, if it were not necessary to give their assent to all its historical statements; (5) this view makes absence of the absolutely pure text intelligible. 11

The intuition theory says that inspiration is but a higher development of that natural insight into truth which all men possess to some degree; a mode of intelligence in matters of

¹⁰ Lewis Sperry Chafer, Systematic Theology. (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1947), p. 69.

 $^{^{11} \}underline{\text{The New Shaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge}}, \, \underline{\text{op. cit}}, \, \underline{\text{p. 18}}.$

morals and religion which gives rise to sacred books, as a corresponding mode of intelligence gives rise to great works of philosophy or art. This mode of intelligence is regarded as the product of man's own powers, either without special divine influence or with only the inworking of an impersonal God. Regarding the intuition theory we see that:

- (1) Man has a certain natural insight into truth, and inspiration uses this, so far as it will go, and makes it an instrument in discovering and recording facts of nature or history.
- (2) In all matters of morals and religion, however, man's insight into truth is vitiated by wrong affections, and unless a supernatural wisdom can guide him, he is certain to err himself, and to lead others into the same mistakes.
- (3) If natural insight is the only source of religious truth, it contradicts itself. If the theory is true, one man is inspired to proclaim as truth what another proclaims is false. The Vedas, the Koran, and the Bible cannot be inspired to contradict each other.
- (4) Moral and religious truth becomes a purely subjective thing - a matter of private opinion - having no objective reality independently of men's opinions regarding it.

¹²Strong, op. cit., p. 202.

(5) It involves denial of a personal God who is truth and who reveals truth; man becomes the highest intelligence in the universe. This tries to explain inspiration by denying existence since, if there is not a personal God, inspiration is only a figure of speech. 13

It is evident, therefore, that the intuition theory emphasizes human authority over divine authority, 14

The third theory is the illumination theory. This theory regards inspiration as merely an intensifying and elevating of the religious perceptions of the Christian, but greater in degree. Any Christian might have been inspired to write the Scribtures. It holds that the Bible is not, but contains, the word of God, and that not the writings, but only the writers, were inspired. The illumination given by the Holy Spirit, however, but the inspired writer only in full possession of his normal powers, but does not communicate objective truth beyond his ability to discover or understand. It differs from the intuition theory by containing several distinctively Christian elements: (1) the influence of a personal God; (2) an extraordinary work of the Holy Spirit; (3) the Christological character of the Scriptures, putting into form a revelation of which Christ is the center (Revelation 19:10). E. G. Robinson says

^{13&}lt;sub>Ibid., pp. 203-204.</sub>

¹⁴Chafer, op. cit., p. 70.

"The office of the Spirit in inspiration is not different from that which he performed for Christians at the time the gospels were written...when the prophets say: 'Thus saith the Lord,' they simply mean that they have divine authority for what they utter." And Calvin E. Stone in <u>History of the Books of the Bible</u> expresses, "It is not the words of the Bible that were inspired. It is not the thoughts of the Bible that were inspired. It was the men who wrote the Bible who were inspired." Considering the illumination theory we may say:

- (1) There is unquestionably an illumination of the mind of every believer by the Holy Spirit, and there may have been instances in which the influence of the Spirit, in inspiration, amounted only to illumination.
- (2) This was not the constant method of inspiration. Such influence cannot account for the revelation of new truth to the prophets and apostles. The illumination of the Holy Spirit gives no new truth, but only a better understanding of the truth already revealed. Any original communication of truth must have required a work of the Spirit different, not in degree, but in kind.
- (3) Mere illumination could not secure the Scripture writers from frequent and grave error. The spiritual perception of the Christian is always rendered to some ex-

¹⁵Strong, op. cit., pp. 204-205.

- tent imperfect and deceptive, and there is no certainty regarding the trustworthiness of the Scriptures as a whole.
- (4) The theory is not logical; it intimates that illumination regarding truth can be imparted without imparting truth itself. However, God must first furnish objective truth to be perceived before he can illuminate the mind to perceive the meaning of that truth.¹⁶

The dictation theory says that the Holy Spirit possessed the minds and bodies of the Scripture writers to such an extent that they became mere instruments rather than men; pens, not penmen, of God. It emphasizes divine authority to the point that it nearly excludes the human element. 17 Of this view we may note the following:

- (1) There are instances recorded in the Bible when God's communications were uttered in an audible voice and took a definite form of words, and this was sometimes accompanied with the command to write down the words.
- (2) This theory is based on a partial induction of Scripture facts, and assumes that such occasional instances of direct dictation reveal God's only method of communicating his truth to the writers of the Bible.
- (3) This theory cannot account for the human element in

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 206-207.

¹⁷Chafer, op. cit., p. 68.

the Scriptures. There are peculiarities of style which distinguish the productions of each writer from those of every other, and there are variations in accounts of the same transaction which are inconsistent with the theory of a solely divine authorship.

- (4) It is inconsistent to assume Scripture writers would have had dictated to them what they already knew, or could find out using their natural powers.
- (5) This contradicts what we know of God's method of working in man's soul. The higher and nobler God's communications, the more fully is man in possession of his own faculties. It is inconceivable that this highest work of man under the influence of God's spirit was purely mechanical.¹⁸

The dynamical theory holds, in opposition to the intuition theory, that inspiration is not just a natural, but also a supernatural fact, and is the immediate work of a personal God in the soul of man. It holds, in opposition to the illumination theory, that inspiration belongs not only to the men who wrote the Scripture, but to the Scripture they wrote, so that these Seciptures, when taken together, constitute a trustworthy and sufficient record of divine revelation. It states, in opposition to the dictation theory, that the Scriptures contain a human as well as

¹⁸strong, op. cit., pp. 208-210.

a divine element, so that while they present a body of divinely revealed truth, this truth is shaped in human moulds and adapted to ordinary human intelligence. The dynamical theory states that inspiration is characteristically neither partial, nor mechanical, but supernatural, plenary, and dynamical.¹⁹

This view states that the writers of the Scripture had the immediate influence of the Spirit to such an extent that they could not err in any point; every statement is accurate and infallible, whether "religious, scientific, historical, or geographical." This view admits that there may be errors in the Scriptures as we now possess them; they assert infallibility for "only the original autographic text." The dynamical plenary view has in its favor (1) the difficulty of conceiving how thought could have been suggested by the Spirit without the language; and (2) the support it gives to the authority of the Scriptures as a system of truth and a guide of action. 20

The present canon does not prove inspiration by measuring its extent. Both must be determined by the same process - the basis of the contents of the books, statements by their authors, their relation to Christ, and the judgment of the church. The unity of the Book, unfolding a single purpose; its elevated tone; the faultless character of Christ; the nature of the facts revealed about God, the soul, and the future; all these stamp it as a work

^{19&}lt;sub>Ibid.</sub>, p. 211.

²⁰The New Shaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, op. cit., p. 17.

of more than ordinary human genius or insight. The Bible is an organism; the inspiration of the whole is not necessarily affected if inspiration is denied to one part. The question of the inspiration of the <u>Gospel of John</u> may be independent of the proof that the <u>Books of the Chronicles</u> are inspired. 21

More specifically, there are six proofs of inspiration which we should note.

- (1) Since God has made a revelation of himself to man, we may reasonably presume that he will not trust this revelation only to human tradition and misrepresentation, but will also provide a record of it essentially trustworthy and sufficient,²²
- (2) Jesus, who has been proved a credible witness and messenger from God, vouches for the inspiration of the Old Testament by quoting it with the formula: "It is written"; by declaring that "one jot or one tittle" of it "shall in no wise pass away."²³
- (3) When Jesus commissioned his apostles, he promised them the Holy Spirit, who would make them infallible in teaching. 24
- (4) The apostles claimed to have received this promised

 $^{^{21} \}text{The New Shaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge,} \ \underline{\text{op.}} \ \underline{\text{cit}}_{\bullet,\bullet} \ \text{p.} \ 18.$

²²Strong, op. cit., p. 198.

^{23&}lt;sub>Chafer, op. cit., p. 83.</sub>

²⁴Hodge, op. cit., p. 160.

Spirit, and under his influence to speak with divine authority, putting their writings on a level with the Old Testament scriptures. We have direct statements that both the matter and form of their teaching were supervised by the Holy Spirit and indirect evidence that this was the case in the tone of authority which pervades their addresses and epistles.²⁵

- (5) The apostolic writers of the New Testament, unlike professedly inspired heathen sages and poets, gave attestation by miracles or prophesy that they were inspired by God, and there is reason to believe that productions of those who were not apostles, such as Mark, Luke, Hebrews, James, and Jude, were recommended to the churches as inspired, by apostolic sanction and authority.²⁶
- (6) The chief proof must always be found in the internal characteristics of the Scriptures themselves, as these are disclosed to the sincere inquirer by the Holy Spirit. The testimony of the Holy Spirit combines with the teaching of the Bible to convince the earnest reader that this teaching is as a whole and in all essentials beyond the power of man to communicate, and it must therefore have been put into permanent

²⁵strong, op. cit., p. 200.

²⁶Ibid., p. 201.

and written form by the special inspiration of $\operatorname{God}_{\bullet}^{27}$

The Bible contains the erring words of men as well as the authoritative word of God. The writing of men, conditioned and limited by their time and peculiarities, were under the illumination of God's presence. It is important that we discriminate between God and man, ²⁸

- (1) The Scriptures are the production equally of God and man, and are therefore never to be regarded as merely human or merely divine.
- (2) The union of divine and human agencies in inspiration is not to be conceived of as one of external impartation and reception.
- (3) Inspiration did not remove, but rather pressed into its own service, all the personal peculiarities of the writers, together with their defects of culture and literary style.
- (4) In inspiration God may use all right and normal methods of literary composition.
- (5) The inspiring Spirit has given the Scriptures to the world by a process of gradual evolution.
- (6) Inspiration did not guarantee inerrancy in things not essential to the main purpose of the Scripture.

²⁷ Ibid.

^{281.} Harold DeWolf, The Case for Theology in Liberal Perspective. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959), p. 47.

- (7) Inspiration did not always involve a direct communication to the Scripture writers of the words they wrote.
- (8) Yet, in spite of the human element, the inspiration of the Scriptures makes these various writings an organic whole.
- (9) When the unity of the Scripture is fully recognized, the Bible, in spite of imperfections in matters nonessential to its religious purpose, furnishes a safe and sufficient guide to truth and salvation.
- (10) While inspiration constitutes Scripture an authority more trustworthy than individual reason or the creeds of the church, the only ultimate authority is Christ himself.
- (11) The preceding points enable us to lay down three principles and to answer three common questions regarding inspiration. The principles are these: (a) the human mind can be inhabited and energized by God while reaching and keeping its own highest intelligence and freedom; (b) the Scripture being the work of the one God, as well as of the men in whom God moved and dwelt, constitute an organic unity; (c) the unity and authority of the Scripture as a whole are entirely consistent with its gradual evolution and with great imperfection in its non-essential parts. The questions are: (a) Is any part of the Scripture inspired? Every part of the Scripture is inspired in its connection

and relation with every other part. (b) Are there degrees of inspiration? There are degrees of value, but not of inspiration. (c) How may we know what parts are of most value and what is the teaching of the whole? The same Spirit of Christ who inspired the Bible is promised to take of the things of Christ, and, by showing them to us, to lead us progressively into all the truth.²⁹

Inevitable difficulties and objections arise in connection with the doctrine of inspiration. Common objections are urged not so much against the religious teaching of the Scripture as against certain errors in secular matters which are supposed to be interwoven with it. The Bible is to be judged as a book whose one aim is man's rescue from sin and reconciliation to God, and in these respects it will still be found a record of substantial truth. Strong argues against certain specific objections.

- (1) Errors in matters of science.
 - (a) We do not admit existence of scientific error in the Scripture. What is charged as such is simply truth presented in popular and impressive forms;
 - (b) It is not necessary to a proper view of inspiration to suppose that human authors of Scripture had in mind the proper scientific interpretations of the natural events they recorded;

²⁹Strong, op. cit., pp. 212-221.

- (c) It may safely be said that science has not yet shown any fairly interpreted passage of Scripture to be untrue:
- (d) Even if errors in matters of science were found in the Scripture, it would not disprove inspiration, since inspiration concerns itself with science only so far as correct scientific views are necessary to morals and religion.
- (2) Errors in matters of history.

recorded, were only known;

- (a) Errors charged as such are often mere mistakes in transcription, and have no force as arguments against inspiration, unless it can first be shown that inspired documents are by the very fact of their inspiration exempt from the operation of those laws which affect the transmission of other documents;
- (b) Other so-called errors are to be explained as a permissible use of round numbers, which cannot be denied to sacred writers except upon the principle that mathematical accuracy was more important than the general impression to be secured by the narrative; (c) Diversities of statement in accounts of the same event, so long as they touch no substantial truth, may be due to the meagreness of the narrative, and might be fully explained if some single fact, now un-
- (d) While historical and archaeological discovery in

many important particulars goes to sustain general correctness of the Scripture narratives, and no statement essential to the moral and religious teaching of the Scripture has been invalidated, inspiration is still consistent with much imperfection in historical detail and its narratives have the possibilities of error.

(3) Errors in morality.

- (a) Such errors are sometimes evil acts and words of good men - words and acts not sanctioned by God;
- (b) Where evil acts appear at first sight to be sanctioned, it is frequently some right intent or accompanying virtue, rather than the act itself, upon which commendation is bestowed;
- (c) Certain commands and deeds are sanctioned as relatively just expressions of justice such as the age cound comprehend, and are to be judged as parts of a progressively unfolding system of morality whose key and culmination we have in Jesus Christ;
- (d) God's righteous soverignty affords the key to other events; he has the right to do what he will with his own, and to punish the transgressor when and where he will, and he may justly make men the foretellers or executors of his purposes;
- (e) Other apparent immoralities are due to unwarranted interpretations: symbol is sometimes taken for literal

fact; appeal to lower motives is taken to exclude, instead of preparing for, the higher.

(4) Errors in reasoning.

- (a) Such errors are generally to be explained as valid argument expressed in highly condensed form; appearance of error may be due to the suppression of one or more links in the reasoning;
- (b) Where we cannot see the propriety of the conclusions drawn from given premises, there is greater reason to attribute our failure to ignorance of divine logic on our part than to accommodation on the part of the Scripture writers:
- (c) Adoption of Jewish methods of reasoning, where it could be proved, would not indicate error on the part of the Scripture writers, but rather an inspired sanction of the method as applied to that particular case; (d) If rabbinical methods have been wrongly employed by the apostles in their argumentation, we might still distinguish between the truth they are seeking to convey and the arguments by which they support it.
- (5) Errors in quoting or interpreting the Old Testament.
 - (a) Such errors are commonly interpretations of the meaning of the original Scripture by the same Spirit who first inspired it;
 - (b) Where an apparently false translation is quoted' from the Septuagint, the sanction of inspiration is given to it, as expressing a part at least of the full-

ness of meaning contained in the divine original a fullness of meaning which two varying translations do not in some cases exhaust;

- (c) The freedom of these inspired interpretations, however, does not warrant us in like freedom of interpretation in the case of other passages whose meaning has not been authoritatively made known;
- (d) While we do not grant that the New Testament writers in any proper sense misquoted or misinterpreted the Old Testament, we do not regard absolute correctness in these respects as essential to their inspiration.

6. Errors in prophecy.

- (a) Such errors may be frequently explained by remembering that much of prophecy is yet unfulfilled;
- (b) The personal surmises of the prophets as to the meaning of the prophecies they recorded may have been incorrect, while yet the prophecies themselves are inspired;
- (c) The prophet's earlier utterances are not to be severed from the later utterances which elucidate them, nor from the whole revelation of which they form a part; it is unjust to forbid the prophet to explain his own meaning;
- (d) The character of prophecy was as a rough general sketch of the future, in highly figurative language, and without historical perspective, renders it peculiarly probable that what at first seem to be errors are

- due to misinterpretation on our part, which confounds the drapery with the substance, or applies its language to events to which it had no reference.
- (7) Certain books are unworthy of a place in the inspired Scripture.
 - (a) This charge may be shown, in each single case, to rest upon a misapprehension of the aim and method of the book, and its connection with the remainder of the Bible, together with a narrowness of nature or of doctrinal view, which prevents the critic from appreicating the wants of the peculiar class of men to which the book is especially serviceable;
 - (b) The testimony of church history and general Christian experience to the profitableness and divinity of the disputed books is of greater weight than the personal impressions of the few who criticize them;
 - (c) Such testimony can be adduced in favor of the value of each one of the books to which exception is taken, such as Esther, Job, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Jonah, James, and Revelation.
- (8) Portions of the Scripture books written by others than the persons to whom they are ascribed. Objection rests upon a misunderstanding of the nature and object of inspiration.
 - (a) In the case of books made up from pre-existing documents, inspiration simply preserved the compilers of

them from selecting inadequate or improper material; (b) In the case of additions to Scripture books by later writers, it is reasonable to suppose that the additions, as well as the originals, were made by later writers, it is reasonable to suppose that the additions, as well as the originals, were made by inspiration, and no essential truth is sacrificed by allowing the whole to go under the name of the chief author:

- (c) It is unjust to deny to the inspired Scripture the right exercised by all historians of introducing certain documents and sayings as simply historical, while their complete truthfulness is neither vouched for nor denied.
- (9) Skeptical or fictitious narratives.
 - (a) Descriptions of human experience may be embraced in the Scripture, not as models for imitation, but as illustrations of doubts, struggles, and needs of the soul;
 - (b) Moral truth may be put by the Scripture writers into parabolic or dramatic form, and the sayings of Satan and of perverse men may form parts of such a production;
 - (c) In none of these cases ought the difficulty of distinguishing man's words from God's words, or ideal truth from actual truth, to prevent our acceptance of

- the fact of inspiration; for it is this very variety of the Bible, combined with the stimulus it gives to inquiry and the general plainness of its lessons, we should expect in a book whose authorship was divine.
- (10) Acknowledgement of the non-inspiration of the Scripture teachers and their writings. This charge rests mainly upon the mis-interpretation of two particular passages.
 - (a) Acts 23:5 (I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest) may be explained either as the language of indignant irony: "I would not recognize such a man as high priest"; or, more naturally, an actual confession of personal ignorance and fallibility, which does not affect the inspiration of any of Paul's final teachings or writings;
 - (b) I Corinthians 7:12, 10 (I, not the Lord; not I, but the Lord). Here the contrast is not between the apostle inspired and the apostle uninspired, but between the apostle's words and an acual saying of our Lord, as in Matthew 5:32; 19:3-10; Mark 10:11; Luke 16:18. The expression may be paraphrased: "With regard to this matter no express command was given by Christ before his ascension. As one inspired by Christ, however, I give you my command." 30

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 222-242.

Certain conclusions may be drawn from the study of inspiration.

- (1) Inspiration, or the presence and influence of the Divine Spirit in the soul of man, cannot be limited to the writers of the Scripture; but, comparing the Bible with other sacred literature of the world, its religious and moral superiority cannot be denied, and we may, therefore, claim for it as a whole a fuller inspiration.
- (2) As different writings in the Bible have more or less important functions in the progressive divine revelation, we may distinguish degrees of inspiration.
- (3) Inspiration is primarily personal, an inward enlightening and quickening, both religious and moral, of the writer, finding an expression conditioned by his individual characteristics in his writing.
- (4) The purpose of inspiration is practical; inspired men are used of God to give guidance in belief and duty by declaring the word and will of God as bearing on human life.
- (5) As revelation is progressive, inspiration does not exclude the defects in doctrine and practice in the earlier stages and their correction in the later stages of development.
- (6) As progressive revelation culminates in Christ, so He possesses the fullest inspiration; and it varies

- in others according to the closeness of their contact and the intimacy of their communion with Him.
- (7) It is the presence and influence in the souls of men of the same Spirit of God as inspired the Scriptures which makes the Bible effective as a means of grace; and only those who yield themselves to the Spirit of God have the witness in themselves that the Bible conveys to them the truth and grace of God.³¹

The subject of inspiration has been dealt with from many different points of view for many years. Several theories have been offered to explain inspiration of the Scriptures, but more often than not the theories men have tried diligently to apply to inspiration have become narrow, limiting, or dogmatic to one degree or another. We must be careful to regard inspiration in the light that it is from God, and any attempt toward explaining it is necessarily restricted to man's finiteness. In this respect any theory falls short of a complete understanding and explanation of inspiration. But we must accept the responsibility of striving to understand more fully the inspiration of God on the Scriptures, for as we do, we come to understand the nature of God more completely. We must approach inspiration, then, with an open and objective mind, always ready to receive any measure of truth that is revealed to us.

^{31&}quot;Inspiration," <u>Encyclopedia Brittanica</u>, 1958, Vol. XII, p. 426.

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